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## PERSEVERANCE.

PERSEVERANCE in the steady pursuit of a laudable and lawful object, is almost a sure path to eminence. It is a thing which seems to be inherent in some, but it may be cultivated in all. Even those children who seem to be either indolent like the sloth, or changeable as the butterfly, by the skilful training of a watchful parent, may be endowed with the habit of perseverance. The following anecdotes may aid in illustrating to youth the nature and value of this virtue. The celebrated Timour the Tartar, after a series of the most brilliant victories, was at length conquered and made captive. Though confined in a prison, whose massive walls and thick iron bars discouraged every attempt to escape, he still strove at each chink and crevice to find some way of deliverance. At length, weary and dispirited, he sat down in a corner of his gloomy prison, and gave himself up to despair. While brooding over his sorrows, an ant, with a piece of wood thrice as large as itself, attracted his attention. The insect seemed desirous to ascend the perpendicular face of the wall, and made several attempts to effect it. But after reaching a little elevation, it came to a jutting angle of the stone, and fell backward to the floor. But again, again, and again the attempt was renewed. The monarch watched the struggles of the insect, and in the interest thus excited forgot his own condition. The ant persevered, and at the sixtieth trial surmounted the obstacle. Timour sprang to his feet, exclaiming, "I will never despair—perseverance conquers all things!"

A similar anecdote is told of Robert Bruce, the restorer of the Scottish monarchy. Being out on an expedition to reconnoitre the enemy, he had occasion to sleep at night in a barn. In the morning, still reclining his head on a pillow of straw, he beheld a spider climbing up a beam of the roof. The insect fell to the ground, but immediately made a second essay to ascend. This attracted the notice of the hero, who with regret saw the spider fall a second time from the same eminence. It made a third unsuccessful attempt. Not without a mixture of concern and curiosity, the monarch twelve times beheld the insect baffled in its aim; but the thirteenth essay was crowned with success. It gained the summit of the barn; and the king, starting from his couch, exclaimed, "This despicable insect has taught me perseverance! I will follow its example. Have I not been twelve times defeated by the enemy's superior force? On one fight more hangs the independence of my country!" In a few days his anticipations were fully realised, by the glorious result, to Scotland, of the battle of Bannockburn.

A few years since, while travelling in an adjacent state, I came to a little valley, surrounded by rocky and precipitous hills. In that valley was a single house. It was old, and, by its irregularity of form, seemed to have been built at various periods. It was, however, in good condition, and bespoke thrift and comfort. Not a shingle was missing from the roof, no dangling clapboards disfigured its sides, no unhinged blinds swung idly in the wind, no old hats were thrust through the windows. All around was tidy and well-conditioned. The woodhouse was stored with tall ranges of hickory, the barns were ample, and stacks of hay without declared that it was full within. The soil around, as I have said, was rocky, but cultivation had rendered it fertile. Thriving orchards, rich pastures and prolific meadows, occupied the bed of the valley and the rugged sides of the hills. I was struck with the scene, and when I reached a village at the distance of two or three miles, I made some inquiries, where I learnt the story of the proprietor. He was originally a poor boy, and wholly dependent upon his own exertions. He was brought up as a farmer, and began life as a day labourer. In childhood he had read that "procrastination is the thief of time." He did not at first understand its meaning, and pondered long upon this desperate thief who bore the formidable title of PROCRASTIN-ATION. It was at length explained to him; but the struggles he had made to comprehend the adage fixed it deep in his mind. He often thought of it, and, feeling its force, it became the ruling maxim of his life. Following its dictates with inflexible perseverance, he at length became proprietor of the little valley I have described. Year by year it improved under his care, and at the period of which I am speaking, he was supposed to be worth at least twenty thousand dollars.

Such is the force of perseverance. It gives power to weakness, and opens to poverty the world's wealth. It spreads fertility over the barren landscape, and bids the choicest fruits and flowers spring up and flourish in the desert abode of thorns

and briars. Look at Boston! Where are the three hills which first met the view of the pilgrims as they sailed up its bay? Their tops are shorn down by man's perseverance. Look at the granite hills of Quincy? Proudly anchored in the bosom of the earth, they seem to defy the puny efforts of man, but they are yielding to man's perseverance. Forbidden and hopeless as they would appear to the eye of indolence and weakness, they are better than the treasures of Peru and the gem-strewn mountains of Brazil, to a people endowed with the hardy spirit of perseverance! They are better, for, while they enable them to command the precious metals yielded by other climes, they cherish a spirit and a power which all the gold of Golconda could not purchase.—*Fireside Education*, by S. G. Goodrich.

## LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP.

"Look before you leap," is an advice applicable to many circumstances of human life, besides the mere examination of the locality in which, on which, or over which, you are about to exhibit your own or your horse's agility in the performance of a saltation. Such was the course of meditation that suggested itself to my mind, as I beheld an old woman step slowly and deliberately off the foot-path of Carlisle Bridge, and, without looking right or left, walk directly across the path of the Kilkenny mail-coach, that was just then coming in, the driver, of course, making his cattle do the thing handsomely, as they were so near home. Before he could pull up, the leaders had upset her, and the coroner had tenpence of his shilling surely counted, when a tall, athletic-looking gentleman, stooping suddenly, seized her by the legs, and dragged her from under the horse's feet, somewhat to the disarrangement of her attire. "Look before you leap," said he, giving her a smart shake; "did you never hear that adage, you stupid creature?"

"Arrah!" said she, with the most perfect innocence, "sure I was't goin' to jump. Such a sayin' was't made for the likes iv me." "Poh! you stupid being," said he, and walked on.

I followed, making the above reflection, when, about half way over, the actively benevolent gentleman saw a little boy about nine or ten years old put his hand into a gentleman's pocket; he instantly, with a promptitude similar to what he had just exhibited, dealt him a blow that nearly knocked the breath out of him.

The proprietor of the pocket, startled by the "*Hagh*" that announced the sudden and almost total expulsion of the sufferer's breath, turned sharply round, and, as the boy staggered over against the balustrades, fiercely asked, "Who did that?"

"That young rascal, sir, had his hand in your pocket," said the striker.

"Well, sir, and what if he had?—He's *my son*."

"Your son! Sir, I beg a thousand pardons. I—I—I—"

There is nothing I hate more than to see an unfortunate individual in an awkward dilemma. Maybe it is from having so often suffered, that I have a sort of fellow feeling. So, merely repeating to the recent promulgator of the old adage his own words, "Look before you leap," I passed on. N.

EPITAPHS.—The shortest, plainest, and truest, are the best. I say the *shortest*, for when a passenger sees a chronicle written upon a tomb, he takes it on trust that some great man lies there buried, without taking pains to examine who it is. Mr Cambden, in his "Remains," presents us with examples of great men who had little epitaphs. And when once a witty gentleman was asked, what epitaph was fittest to be written on Cambden's tomb, "let it be," said he, "Cambden's remains." I say also the *plainest*, for except the sense lie above ground, few will trouble themselves to dig for it. Lastly, it must be *true*; not as in some monuments, where the red veins in the marble may seem to blush at the falsehoods written on it. He was a witty man who first taught a stone to speak, but he was a wicked man who first taught it to lie. A good memory is the best monument; others are subject to casualty and time; and we know that the Pyramids themselves, dotting with age, have forgotten the names of their founders.—*Scrap Book*.

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